

Gazette Article. Sept 2005 Issue.

### Behind the scenes at the Nationals

I have a confession to make; I attended my first Nationals this year. I have a suggestion to make. If you have never attended one, put it on your list of "things I must do" even if you do not take a dog to show.

Marcia Tucker (Sunsprite) told me "you don't go to Nationals expecting to win, you go to showcase your dog and see other top dogs from other parts of the country, to see the young dogs in the futurities that are our future, and to meet all those people you have heard of and who's names are in your pedigrees, or who you only know from being online. Anything else is gravy." I would like to add, that when you go to a Nationals, "you never meet a stranger!"

Personally, I went to party, party, party and took enough booze and homemade wine to sink a ship. I only took my Specials bitch and planned on showing her myself in Sweepstakes and Best of Breed, but add on my roommates and we had 13 dogs total entered or to care for. My "handler" would not be going to Nationals, and gave me some suggestions on showing my own dog. He said, "Just follow her around the ring, try not to embarrass MY (his) dog in the ring, don't go in the ring with a hangover and fall down, and please don't screw her up before you bring her home and I have to take her to the next show cluster." Despite his lack of confidence in me, I did manage to come home with a small piece of the "action."

We came home from the Nationals exhausted, (and not from partying) but I would cheerfully have gone back the following week. The wine was donated to the raffle table and half the makings of Cosmopolitans came back home with me. It was just non-stop being busy from early morning until you dropped at night. Get up, get the dogs out, rotate whose turn it is to keep dogs safe in the x-pen and who's turn it is for the shower. Get the dogs in, and touch up the grooming, get dressed for the ring or go over and watch the classes. Everyone wants to watch the classes, and at the same time they want to keep their own dogs in the x-pens and not in crates. And I apologize to all those individuals who are probably in therapy now after seeing me in the early morning by the x-pens in my PJ's, with bed hair and no makeup before the caffeine kicked in. Actually, down the entire strip of motel room row, we all were treated to this same vision of women in the early a.m. Why is it the men do not face this serious morning dilemma?

And I cannot wait to go to the 2006 Nationals in Kentucky, which will also be within driving distance for me. It was a most awesome experience. Hanging with my gal pals all week, meeting new people, having that instant camaraderie, and having the opportunity to see and/or actually put your hands on some incredible dogs! Not only are there many outstanding adult dogs being shown, but there are some incredible young dogs coming out that we will be hearing a lot about as they make their mark in the show ring. We were all there for the same reason, to see what everyone else in the breed has, and to compare dogs from both coasts and in-between. And I sincerely hope I managed to deepen some old friendships and strengthen some Internet friendships. I was so thrilled to meet everyone and thank you to everyone who took the time to drop by the room to say "hi", or pulled up a chair to hang out by the x-pens and chat with us! Detailed results of the placings at the Nationals can be seen online at [www.minpin.org](http://www.minpin.org), and commentaries by the judges should be posted by the time this article is published. Faith Gordon, 15 Elkhart St., Lackawanna, NY 14218, [maudminpin@aol.com](mailto:maudminpin@aol.com).